



Colchester Public Schools

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May 15, 2020

Dear Colchester Families,

Here is the weekly update of Colchester Public Schools' responses to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

School Closure Update

On May 5th, Governor Lamont ordered in-person classes at all K-12 public school facilities in Connecticut to remain cancelled for the rest of the 2019-2020 academic year, and to continue providing distance learning during this period.

May 22nd: Early-Release Day

Colchester Public Schools faculty will be meeting in grade level and departmental teams on the afternoon of May 22, 2020 as a part of their regularly scheduled planning time. Students and families should not expect Meet sessions or activities to be scheduled during that time.

Food Security Program: Change in Pick-up Times

Beginning Wednesday, May 20th, meal serving times will be 9AM to 10:30AM at Bacon Academy, Monday - Friday. There will be no meals service on Monday, May 25th: Memorial Day. Our meals service will continue to provide meals to any child 18 years of age and younger, regardless of which town or city the child lives or what school they attend. For more information on this program, visit our website: [CPS Food Security Program](#). In addition, the Colchester Food Bank is distributing pre-packed food bags containing as many staples as they have on hand. If you or someone you know needs food, don't hesitate to call their office at (860) 537-7255 to schedule a pick-up time.

Plan for Retrieval/Drop-Off of Student Belongings

By Friday, May 15th, all schools will have a schedule and protocol for the retrieval of student belongings left in lockers and gym lockers, medications, and the drop-off of borrowed materials (school supplies, technology, textbooks, library books, uniforms, etc.). This information will be provided from each school directly.

NEW Feedback Survey

Please talk to your student about his or her experience online, then complete the following anonymous survey: [Student/Parent Feedback: Phase III: New Learning](#). This is a **new** survey and responses will be used to help us make the student/parent experience even better!

Summer School

We anticipate that Governor Lamont will provide guidance on Summer School toward the end of this week.

Special Education

At the May 12th BOE meeting, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Kathleen Perry presented a summary of distance learning and special accommodations for children who have an IEP or have a 504 plan. Please see the minutes of the meeting for the details of the presentation: [BOE Meeting Minutes](#)

Spotlight on Staff: Custodians and Information Technology

- I am grateful for the work that Custodians do every day to keep our schools safe, clean, and healthy for our students and staff. The Head and Day Custodians have been hard at work during school closures to clean and disinfect our schools. At Bacon Academy, Colchester Elementary School, and Jack Jackter Intermediate School, custodians have facilitated the work for the implementation of the Security Grant projects and other corrective maintenance projects. Night custodians came back to work May 4th and are now focused on summer cleaning.
- The Information Technology team ensures that each and every one of our students, staff, and community members are prepared with the technology they need to support and advance learning. Our outstanding team is dedicated to responding to hundreds of support tickets and figuring out creative solutions to technology-related hardware and software items, on and off our network. A 2020-21 budget priority is 1-1 devices for students; this is the hardworking team that will make it happen. Thank you to all of our IT specialists.

A Thank You to Essential Helpers

CES created a video, [Look for the Helpers](#), as a token of their appreciation to let Essential Helpers know how thankful we are for all that they do. You are heroes!

2020-2021 Budget Process Update

At the Board of Education meeting on May 12th, the Board voted to revise the 2020-21 budget from a 2.99% increase to a 0.4% increase in light of the current economic situation. The reductions were done in a way to avoid directly impacting students and details of the reductions are posted as part of the minutes of the meeting. All documents related to budget discussions, including proposed reductions, can be found on our [Budget Webpage](#). Please visit the [Town's website](#) for more information on the budget process, important dates, and timeline. For public access to virtual BOE meetings, visit the [Board of Education Website](#). Any questions pertaining to agenda items should be directed to boardquestions@colchesterct.org. Questions must be submitted at least one hour prior to the start of the meeting.

Have a question or concern?

- Visit our Frequently Asked Questions and Answers: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- **EMAILS**
General questions: covid19@colchesterct.org
Tech questions: techhelp@colchesterct.org
BOE questions: boardquestions@colchesterct.org
- For questions pertaining to a specific school, please email the teacher, administrator, or office staff of that school directly.

Patriotic Porch Concert: Friday, May 22nd at 12:00PM

A message from Colchester Public Schools Band Directors Jenn Knickerbocker, Keith Morrissette, and Thomas Kessler: Members of the band at JJIS, WJJMS, and Bacon will be sharing their musical talents on their front porch or driveway in honor of those who protect us at home and abroad. On behalf of the Colchester Public Schools Band Program, we would like to thank all of our military, medical, and emergency service members. Thank you for keeping us safe. We hope that you enjoy the show!

Healthy Practices

As the weather warms up, gardening can be a fun family activity. This week's suggestions come from Katherine Kosiba, President of the Colchester Garden Club and Advanced Master Gardener:

- [Your Garden Your Family Food Health Learning for a Lifetime](#)
- [Gardening with Young Children – Dig In](#)
- [Container Gardening](#)
- [Incorporate Vegetables/herbs into Flower Beds](#)
- [An Introduction to Vegetable Gardening](#)

Colchester Elementary School's New Assistant Principal: Meghan Breen Amado

Colchester Public Schools is pleased to welcome Meghan Breen Amado to our District!

Please see this press release for an introduction: [Meghan Breen Amado](#)

Youth Services Questionnaire on Summer Plans

Youth Services is asking parents to complete this questionnaire on summer plans so they may gauge how to best serve students: [Youth Services Survey on Summer Plans](#)

Lastly, please enjoy this video from last week's parade: [CES Staff Appreciation Parade Video](#).

Take care and please be safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Burt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Burt
Superintendent